



You are a passenger on the luxurious Oriental Express. Your fellow passengers number several unsavory characters, almost certainly up to no good. You don't know who you can trust. You hope to make it through the last leg of the trip alive. Unexpectedly, the train is snowed in and one of the passengers is murdered. Fortunately, the famed detective Pardot is on board. The identity of the murderer should be discovered by the time the police arrive.

Last Stop Murder
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Playing with Murder

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I. Introductory Materials

Section I of this instruction manual contains all of the introductory materials necessary for planning and preparing your party. In this section you will find a basic overview of the plot; a description of each of the characters; tips on preparing your playing area, choosing a menu, and organizing your printouts; and detailed instructions on how to go about inviting players and assigning characters.

Please note: The majority of the contents of this book are intended for the eyes of the Host/Hostess only! The success of your party hinges on a strong element of intrigue and mystery, so be certain not to share this book with the other players. The material that should be provided to your guests is clearly described in this book. Under no circumstances should you allow any of your players access to this book!

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing *Last Stop Murder*, another fine product by PWM Press. This package contains everything you need to host a spectacular Murder Mystery Party that your guests will remember for many years to come. Included are materials for hosting a party for anywhere from ten to fifteen participants (including yourself).

Mystery Parties are essentially a combination of improvisational acting, storytelling, and creative problem solving. Your guests will each assume the role of a particular character and will play the part of that character throughout the course of the game. Each character has specific personality traits, goals, secrets, and information, all of which are included in the character sheet. A big part of the entertainment value of Mystery Parties is getting into character and trying to achieve your character's individual goals.

At some point during the party, an Event will occur that will force the players to come together in order to solve a problem or unravel a mystery. Traditionally, the Event in question will be the murder of one of the characters (as played by a guest), but the basic framework of a Mystery Party can accommodate numerous different types of Events.

The guests will need to use the information that their characters know (as well as additional clues that are provided during the game) to solve the mystery or overcome the problem posed by the Event. Typically this culminates in the guests voting on the identity of the murderer, but again, different parties will have different specific goals. The party may also have certain additional subgames built into the framework; for example, many Mystery Parties will have some form of scavenger hunt built into the story.

Once the mystery has been solved or the problem has been overcome, the party draws to a close. Guests are provided with an opportunity to vote on the best actor/actress, the best-dressed player, and so forth, and are then given certificates and awards for their participation in the game.

Throughout the course of the party, the Host/Hostess is responsible for ensuring that the event continues to run smoothly. He or she sets the scene, provides dinner and drinks, and moves the plot along at key points by reading scripted descriptions of what is happening. Frequently the Host/Hostess will also play the part of one of the characters.

This particular Mystery Party, *Last Stop Murder*, is a Murder Mystery wherein each party guest will be playing the role of a passenger or crew member on the Orient Express during its final leg from Bucharest to Istanbul, and the Host/Hostess will

be playing the part of the Sampson (Hypaetia, if female) Pardot, a famous detective who will unravel the mystery at the end.

Please be advised: The parties developed by PWM Press are substantially more complex and detailed than other similar products. Even if you are experienced at hosting Murder-Mystery Parties, it is imperative that you read chapters one through seven carefully and completely before beginning to plan out your party!

What Is My Role?

As the Host or Hostess, your role in the party is that of a facilitator or storyteller. It is your job to plan the event, prepare the playing area, and, once the game begins, move the story along and make certain that everyone is on task and enjoying themselves.

In many Mystery Parties the Host or Hostess is given the option to not learn the identity of the murderer before the game, thereby allowing him or her to participate in the party in the same way as the other guests. However, because *Last Stop Murder* is a more complex party, it is necessary for the Host or Hostess to have a clear understanding of all key plot points in order to ensure that the game runs smoothly. This means that you will be aware of the killer and victim's identities in advance.

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Running the Party

This portion of the instruction manual will walk you through all of the steps you need to follow once your guests arrive. Read over this section carefully as it contains information vital to the success of the event.

Guest Arrival

As each guest arrives, you should pass out their nametag and character sheet (if needed) from the first folder and then allow them to mingle until everyone arrives.

During this stage of the event, the Host/Hostess should:

- 1) Make certain that everyone has a visible nametag.
- 2) Make certain that everyone has a copy of their character sheet.
- 3) Make appetizers and drinks available.

Introduction

Once everyone has arrived, start the audio file for the sound of the train moving. You should put this file on a continuous loop until Act One is finished. Gather the guests together in the main room and read aloud the "Welcome to the Party" text, which will explain to them the basic framework of the event. This text is provided below and is also included in Section III of this handbook as a printout; if you are so inclined, you can print out a copy for each guest for easy reference.

During this stage of the event, the Host/Hostess should:

- 1) Make certain that all the guests understand how the party is going to be run.
- 2) Answer any questions regarding the introduction.

Welcome to the Party

Script 1: To be read by the Host or Hostess after all of the guests have arrived but before the event officially begins.

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for attending *Last Stop Murder*. As all of you know, this is a Murder Mystery Party. During the party, each of you will be playing the role of a passenger or crew member on the Orient Express. Each of you has a character sheet that details special knowledge and goals that your character has, along with certain instructions for ways that your character should respond to specific situations. Aside from these instructions, and the general role-playing tips on your character sheets, there is no particular script that you need to follow; simply do your best to act as you believe your character would act.

You should also know that four of the guests are international spies. Each of these spies works for a different agency, has a unique codename, and has a mission to accomplish during the evening.

During the course of the evening, I will be playing the part of Sampson/Hypaetia Pardot, a famous international detective. I am on board the train as a favor to the director of Compagnie Internationale de Wagons-Lits. There have been a series of unusual thefts on the train lately that I am here to investigate. However, I will also be available to answer any questions about how the game works. Just let me know if you need to ask me something "out of character."

Before we begin, we'll give everyone a couple of minutes to read over your character sheets and make sure you understand everything. Remember not to show your character sheet to anyone else and to be careful with what information you end up sharing with other players. Most of you have secret information listed on your sheet that your character wouldn't want disclosed to just anyone.

[After everyone has had a chance to read over their sheets, give them an opportunity to ask questions about how the game will work. After all of their questions have been answered, continue with this script.]

All right, if there are no further questions, let me describe the scene for you. You are on board the Orient Express which goes from Paris to Istanbul. It is mid-winter some time in 1956. We are near the final leg of the trip between Budapest and Bucharest. Soon dinner will be served, after which the passengers

will retire to their cabins for the night.

[Point out each of the different rooms that are considered part of the game, and explain what part of the train they represent. You should have at least one large room for the dining car and another area that represents the sleeper car. You can specify other areas as you wish, depending on the size of the playing area.]

You are now free to mingle with each other and enjoy the ride. Dinner will be served promptly at 7:00 p.m. And now, if I could see the Conductor and other staff in the kitchen.

[At this point you can take the Conductor into the kitchen and explain that part of his or her role tonight will be to assist with serving the food, bringing around appetizer trays, and keeping drinks refilled.]

Act One

Act One is relatively simple and is intended primarily as an opportunity for your guests to get into character, mingle, and enjoy the food. Most of the guests have a relatively simple mission to accomplish by interacting with the other guests. This act should last for approximately an hour, although the time may be adjusted up or down depending on how long it takes to eat and on how animated and in character your guests are.

During this stage of the event, the Host/Hostess should:

- Enlist the aid of any guests who are playing the parts of train staff to help serve dinner.
- Monitor the guests to make sure they seem to be enjoying themselves and aren't running out of things to talk about. If conversation begins to slow substantially, you may wish to move on to the murder early.

The Murder

After the guests have finished their desserts and accomplished their missions, stop the soundtrack and read aloud the "There is a Murderer among Us" text. This text is provided below and is also included as separate printout in Section III.

Sampson/Hypaetia Pardot Act One

The Detective

Who You Are



(Hypaetia is pronounced "Hi Pay Sha", Pardot is pronounced "Par Dough")

You are Sampson (male) or Hypaetia (female) Pardot, a world-famous detective. You possess one of the finest investigative minds of the twentieth century. You are a retired police detective turned private investigator, on board the train at the behest of your friend, the director of Compagnie Internationale de Wagons-Lits, the company that operates the Orient Express. You are here to investigate a series of thefts from first class passengers aboard the train. You suspect a member of the staff. At the behest of your friend, you've volunteered to act as a representative of the Wagons-Lits company to assure the passengers of their safety.



Getting Into Character

You are a keen observer of human behavior and are curious to a fault. You have a warm, friendly demeanor and get along with almost everyone. When talking to people you should not just look at them but stare into them as if you can see what they're trying to hide. While conversing with the guests in character, try to recall all of the things you, as the host, know about their character. This should give you the look of someone who sees more than what is immediately apparent.

Try to develop a "thinking" gesture such as stroking your chin or chewing on your glasses. Carry around a small notebook to write down your ideas. Spend a lot of time watching the other guests.

You are playing an older character who is technically retired. As far as costuming is concerned, you want to look comfortable but professional.

You are cordially invited to



A Murder-Mystery Party

Date

Time

Location

Details Enclosed.

Please RSVP no later than

What Is a Murder-Mystery Party?

You have been invited to be a passenger on the Orient Express. The passenger manifest includes a variety of rich, influential individuals from the upper echelons of Europe (and possibly some spies), as well as members of the train's crew. Everyone is expecting a luxurious train ride replete with dinner and drinks—they aren't expecting foul weather, a dastardly deed, and getting involved in an international incident.

Last Stop Murder is a Murder Mystery Party wherein the guests will take on the roles of passengers and staff on the Orient Express and play as those characters throughout the course of the event. At some point during the evening, one of the guests will be "killed" by one of the other participants, and the remainder of the evening will be spent piecing together clues in an attempt to determine who the murderer is. Food and drink will be provided.

Included with this invitation are an RSVP card and a brief description of the characters. Please return the RSVP card as soon as possible!

The Guest List

Male roles are marked ♂, female roles are marked ♀, and characters that can be either gender are marked ♀♂.

♀♂ **Sampson/Hypaetia Pardot, the Detective** (*Played by the Host or Hostess*): A world famous detective investigating a series of crimes committed aboard the Orient Express recently.

♀♂ **Pierre/Monet Parpadue, the Conductor**: The Conductor of the Orient Express and quite possibly the world's rudest Frenchman/woman.

♀♂ **Sam Ignatio, the Porter**: A vital member of the Orient Express staff who sees and hears everything.

♂ **Stephen Goldring, the American**: A wealthy American businessman with a taste for the finer things in life, particularly women.

♂ **Ernesto Vespucci, the Gambler**: An Italian gambler who loves food and drink.

♂ **Count Zoltan Navatov, the Count**: A wealthy Hungarian nobleman returning from his second honeymoon with his wife in Paris.

♂ **Colonel Major General Reginald Tobias, the General**: A retired British army officer on his way to India.

♂ **Roderick Broadhausen, the Student**: A European university student suffering from a deep bout of existential angst.

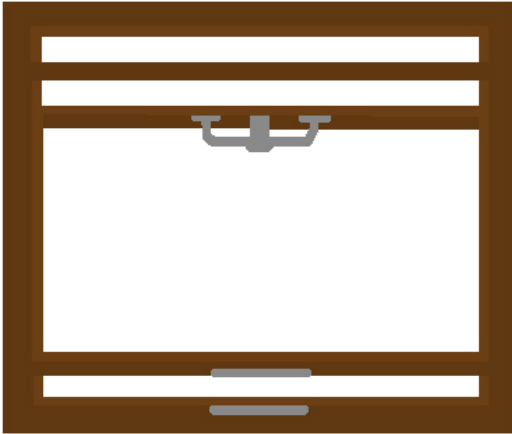
♀ **Patty Hunt, the Widow**: A wealthy American widow with four dead husbands and a dark reputation.

♀ **Princess Elisabetta Dagomir, the Princess**: A wealthy Russian princess who loves books and intelligent debate.

♀ **Gretchen Sutteberg, the Maid**: Princess Dagomir's personal servant and constant companion.

♀ **Suzette Delacroix, the Headmistress**: A teacher currently traveling to her next job aboard the first class car for the first time.

♀ **Annette "Annie" Mayfield, the Saleswoman**: An ambitious American saleswoman who dreams of becoming Europe's first make-up mogul.



Vital Clue Token

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The Unlocked Compartment

The window and door of the compartment next to the victim's was unlocked. It is possible that the killer could have gained access to the victim's room by leaving through this window and entering the victim's room through his open window.

Outstanding Acting
Award

For receiving the most votes for best acting,

is hereby awarded the Outstanding Acting Award.
Great job, and thanks for playing *Last Stop Murder!*

Awarded on _____

